

ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	INL-00	DOTE-00	PDI-00
	DS-00	DHSE-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VCI-00	DIAS-00	H-00
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	ARMY-00	MOFM-00
	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	PM-00	GIWI-00
	SCT-00	DOHS-00	FMPC-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00
	T-00	NCTC-00	ASDS-00	R-00	ECA-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00	FA-00	SWCI-00

(SAS) /000W

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D)

-----2458B7 302036Z /38

O 301738Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3482
INFO CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 000313

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/NB, EUR/PPD, L/HHR, L/PM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/29/2017
TAGS: PTER, PREL, PHUM, NATO, KPAO, IC
SUBJECT: Icelandic MFA "confirms" CIA detainee flights through
Iceland, wants searches of future flights

Ref: Reykjavik 203

Classified By: Amb. Carol van Voorst for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: Iceland's Minister for Foreign Affairs told the press on October 27 that an internal ministry review had confirmed that aircraft linked to CIA rendition operations had transited Iceland on a number of occasions since 2001, including as recently as July 2007. The Minister noted that it was impossible to determine whether such flights had carried detainees when landing in Iceland or entering the country's airspace, and said that in the future she wants closer inspection or searches of aircraft "known" to be linked to CIA operations should they land in Iceland. The opposition leader argues that the MFA should apologize for Iceland's "responsibility" in the matter, while muddling the question of blanket NATO overflight clearances for military aircraft and the rendition flight issue.

B1

SUMMARY.

2. (U) Icelandic Foreign Minister Ingibjorg Solrun Gisladdottir reported in a radio interview on October 27 that aircraft suspected of operating CIA rendition flights had transited Iceland "a number of times" from September 2001 on, including one case as recent as July of this year. She cautioned, however, that it is not possible to determine whether or not there were prisoners on board any of the flights in question. The FM's comments are the result of an internal ministry review she ordered in the wake of Swiss Parliamentarian Dick Marty's most recent report on alleged rendition flights earlier this summer (reftel). Gisladdottir added that she would like the Government of Iceland to look into options for closer scrutiny of future flights by CIA-linked aircraft, including onboard searches by border police and customs officers. In comments reported by leading daily Morgunbladid on October 29, the FM added that it would be "very grave if prisoners have been moved through Icelandic airspace for the purpose of torture, as this would be inconsistent with international law and Iceland's obligations."

3. (U) In response to the FM's statements, Left-Green party leader Steingrímur Sigfússon was quick to demand that Gisladdottir apologize for the Icelandic government's "responsibility" in the matter. In so doing, Sigfússon referred to an October 2001 meeting of the North Atlantic Council in which NATO allies agreed to invoke Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Sigfússon, pointing to this decision as having "authorized" rendition flights, garbled the distinction between the military operations specified by the NAC and the civilian aircraft described in the Marty report as well as the Icelandic MFA's findings. This is an all-too-common mistake in commentary here on the matter, though state radio, in a follow-up piece on October 28, gave the first clear explanation of military and civilian overflight and landing permissions in the press in recent memory.

4. (SBU) Public reaction has otherwise been muted, with no other politicians commenting on the topic and no other media outlets reporting on the issue. However, Prime Minister Haarde has been out of the country for most of the last week, leaving open the possibility of further questions upon his return. Additionally, FM Gisladdottir will present the annual Foreign Ministry report to the Althingi (parliament) on November 8, posing another opportunity for discussion on the matter.

van Voorst

NNNN